LPG agencies allotted in Arunachal Pradesh

849. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG agencies allotted in Arunachal Pradesh during the last three years and till date, district-wise;

(b) the target fixed for allotment of new LPG agencies in the State during 2000-2001; and

(c) the steps being taken, so far, to achieve this goal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (c) During the last three years (i.e. 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99 and April 1999 till date) the oil companies have allotted 5 LPG distributorships in Arunachal Pradesh.

In addition 3 LPG distributorships have been advertised by the oil companies for selection of distributors through the Dealer Selection Boards. Dealer Selection Boards have since been dissolved. It generally takes 6 to 12 months for commissioning of dealership/distributorship from the date of interview.

Identification of new areas for oil exploration

850. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:'

(a) whether Government have identified some new areas for oil exploration;

(b) if so, the details thereof, during the last two years; and

(c) whether drilling operations in these areas have commenced and if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) Exploration of hydrocarbons is an on-going process, consisting of seismic data acquisition, processing, interpretation, prospect identification and drilling. During the last

two years, a number of new areas/structures were identified in the following basins:—

Cambay basin, Himalyan Foothills, Vindhyan basin, Cauvery basin, Krishna-Godavari basin, Upper Assam basin, Assam-Arakan Fold belt, Ganga Valley basin, Rajasthan basin and East Coast and West Coast basin.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Merger of CRL and MRL with public sector oil companies

851. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal to merge Cochin Refineries Ltd. (CRL) and Madras Refineries, Ltd. (MRL) with some public sector oil companies is under consideration of Government;

(b) if so, whether the proposal would be in the interest of these refineries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (c) The Govt. have yet to take a view on the subject.

Production of Gas from Tapti Fields

852. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production of gas from Tapti fields has gone up to 20 MCMD;

(b) if so, to whom the gas has been allocated;

(c) whether it is a fact that the allocation of gas is being made to others, denying the Gujarat of its legitimate demand of 2.25 MCMD for Pipavav Power Project; and

(d) how much gas has been diverted to HBJ pipeline in last four